



## LESSON FOUR

### STEP THREE

*Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.*

The practice of Step Three is like opening a door to a new life. All we have to do is make the decision and it is ours. The key to the door is willingness. Effort in this Step yields great rewards.

The first two Steps call for acceptance. The Third Step requires positive action in order to accomplish it. This is the first of the *action* Steps. With the successful completion of this Step, an individual can remain sober by virtue of a Higher Power rather than by virtue of endurance.

Let us look at the words in Step Three.

*Made* refers to positive action. In our drinking days we took very self-destructive actions. Now we take action to reverse this course and seek help from someone or something greater than ourselves in order to lead more fruitful and happy lives.

*Decision* is from Latin and it means to cut in half. When we make a decision about a problem, we cut it in half. When we decide to let a Higher Power help us with our drinking, we have half solved our problem.

We see it works for other people; therefore, it can work for us. All we are asked is to try to make a beginning. Even the smallest beginning is all that is needed. The great enemy of this Step is delaying this decision.

The mere fact that we are here indicates that we want to do something about our drinking. In other words, we have made some decisions.

*To turn my will and my life over* is a matter of trust that usually involves trial and error. We wonder, *Do I lose my identity? Do I become the hole in the*

*doughnut? Or does it mean enjoying the fruit of someone else's work so that I might attain my true destiny? In my tunnel vision I cannot perceive what my true nature is.*

We have always functioned in the delusion that we were controlling our own lives. We had a false sense of security. Even though we now see that our way didn't work, we still feel threatened by the request to risk a Higher Power doing it for us.

## **KEY IDEA 1**

Our great need is loss of self-centeredness and alcoholic obsession.

### **HARDCOVER**

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### **PAPERBACK**

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## **SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION**

Wisdom is the ability to perceive alternatives. In our alcoholic thinking we insisted that only we knew what was good for us. When we decide to turn our will and lives over we make a declaration of independence. We declare our freedom from the chains of our self-centered ego and the unrelenting demands of self-will. When we decide that God is god and we are not, we begin to receive the wonderful future that has been planned for us.

**KEY IDEA 2**

When we have made this crucial decision, our attitude changes rapidly from negative to wholesome, constructive thinking.

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**SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION**

Alcoholic thinking is muddled and defensive, constantly rationalizing for justification. The need for others in recovery and a sponsor as objective references is evident. We find reality never changes, but our attitude toward it can. How we react to reality makes our reality.

**KEY IDEA 3**

We are advised the AA program is simple.

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**SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION**

Utilize don't analyze. Identify don't compare. The emphasis here is on doing. Understanding will come later. Intellectualizing can be a stall tactic, a cop out. When we're always in our own heads, we're behind enemy lines.

**KEY IDEA 4**

We should not confuse organized religion with AA.

**HARDCOVER**

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**SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION**

Who or what have we chosen for our Higher Power? It is helpful at this time to decide on our own Higher Power rather than assume one that has been defined for us.

**KEY IDEA 5**

Since this is no overnight process, we suggest thought and prayer in the matter.

**HARDCOVER**

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**PAPERBACK**

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**SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION**

Most people experience a slow process of “spiritual awakening,” even though a few, such as Bill W. in his story in the Big Book, experience a sudden and dramatic one. Sometimes spiritual progress may seem slow to us, but if we honestly work the program, that progress is sure.

**KEY IDEA 6**

We demand maturity without the pains of experience and growth.

**HARDCOVER**

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**SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION**

Maturity is the ability to postpone immediate gratification. Emotionally immature, we want what we want, when we want it. When we act like babies, we think we are the center of the universe. When we admit defeat, we need to put our childish behavior behind us. We change from believing in Baby Power to believing in a Higher Power.

**KEY IDEA 7**

Procrastination and skepticism are enemies of spiritual attainment.

**HARDCOVER**

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**SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION**

Alcoholics are romantic dreamers. They want life to happen to them rather than take the initiative to participate in life. An American proverb reminds us, "Success is a ladder that cannot be climbed with your hands in your pockets."

**KEY IDEA 8**

We stop playing God. We surrender our self-centeredness to Him.

**HARDCOVER**

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**SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION**

Humility enables us to surrender to win. Our decision in the Third Step is our claim to a new way of life. The prison of our sick egos that was our home is slowly being destroyed. We decide to Let Go and Let God daily.